

that day to survive. She lost her right eye and her life was filled with corrective surgeries and extensive medical care for her injuries. There were 21 survivors of the bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church but no single family suffered as much as the Collins family, losing Addie Mae and caring for Sarah's multiple injuries.

The physical and emotional scars of this senseless tragedy remain with Sarah as she continues her extraordinary life. Even today, there are moments when she struggles mentally with her fate of being bombed at just 12 years old. Despite the persistent aftermath of the events, she is dedicated to making sure that the nation remembers the bombing and its significance to the civil rights movement. Sarah shares her painful story in hopes that future generations will know their history and remember those that were symbols of the civil rights movement.

Today, I salute Sarah Collins-Rudolph for her sacrifices to our country. We are often reminded of the civil rights giants that fought on the front lines for justice and equality. But it is an imperative that we never forget the sacrifices made by all those who were a part of this transformative time in America. On behalf of a grateful nation, we say thank you to Mrs. Sarah Collins-Rudolph for the personal sacrifice and courageous fight she has endured for civil and equal rights. On that Sunday morning in 1963, Sarah's life changed instantly and she was forever scarred by the actions of those who sought to stifle America's movement. But because of Sarah, we rejoice in a new era of our history that realizes the dreams of those before us.

We salute Mrs. Collins-Rudolph because her story was a catalyst for a new America. Her sacrifices led us to the liberties and freedoms that many of us enjoy today. I am especially grateful for Sarah's story for had it not been for her painful journey, my own journey would not be possible. As Alabama's first Black Congresswoman, I stand before you today with a humble heart knowing that Sarah's journey paved the way for my own place in American history.

I ask all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in saluting Mrs. Sarah Collins-Rudolph, an Alabama treasure and an American hero.

TO RECOGNIZE THE FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE AND THE 2013 FAIRFAX COUNTY FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME HONOREES

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Fairfax County Youth Football League and to congratulate the 2013 Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame honorees and scholarship award recipients.

The importance of youth sports cannot be overstated. Participation in organized sports instills in our youth many values that will serve them well throughout life. These values include sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, a sense of belonging, and maybe most important, the work ethic developed by striving for

success and working to achieve a common goal. Organized youth sports also contribute to our society. Studies have shown a correlation between participation in sporting activities and increased academic performance. Some studies indicate that a reduction in gang activity can be partially attributed to refocusing at-risk children into organized, supervised activities such as youth sports.

I commend the Fairfax County Youth Football League for providing opportunities for our children to succeed and be a part of a team. I also congratulate the following students, coaches and community leaders who are being recognized at the 23rd Annual Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame:

\$1,500 Scholarship Award Recipients: Raina Aide (Cheerleading, J.E.B. Stuart HS), Harrison "Sonny" Romine (Football, Chantilly HS), Brian Deely (Football, Westfield HS), and Ben Sanford (Football, Madison HS)

Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame 2013 Inductees: Evan Royster (Washington Redskins, Penn State, Westfield HS, FPHYC), Bruce Hanson (Head Coach, Yorktown HS), and Steve Wilmer (Coach/Commissioner—McLean Youth Football)

Football Official of the Year—Youth Sports: Steve Caruso (Fairfax County Football Officials Association)

Karl Davey Community Achievement Award: Tom Healy (Southwestern Youth Association, FCYFL)

Tom Davis Meritorious Service Award: Deb Garris (Manager, Synthetic Turf Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority)

Gene Nelson Commissioner of the Year Award: Jason McEachin (Dulles South Youth Sports)

High School Players of the Year: Jonathan Allen (Stone Bridge HS), Tyler Donnelly (Yorktown HS), Oren Burks (South County HS), Sean Huelskamp (Chantilly HS), Scott Carpenter (Gonzaga College HS), Nick Newman (Battlefield HS)

High School Coaches of the Year: Mickey Thompson (Stone Bridge HS), Jason Rowley (Oakton HS)

Youth Sports Players of the Year: Avery Howard (Manassas YFL), Virginia "Ginny" Delacruz (SYC), Justin Burke (RYA), Preston Bacon (CYA), Miles Thompson (Fairfax Police Youth Club), Anthony Eaton, Jr. (Alexandria Youth Football), Hunter Godin (APYFL), Robbie McGoff (SCAA), Nicholas DiVecchia (SYA), Markel Harrison (VYI), Carlo Esposito (BRYC), Michael Bayeux-Gary (HOYF), Phillippe Oliveros (CYA), Joshua Breece (Ft. Belvoir Youth Sports), Noah Adler (VYI), Christian Jessup (Dulles South Youth League)

Youth Sports Coaches of the Year: Anthony Price (Gum Springs Community Center), Buddy Morris (BRYC), Tommy Durand (Arlington Football League), Donny Cooke (VYI)

Youth Cheerleaders of the Year: Haley Clay (Dulles South Youth League), Rachel Strauss (VYI), Angel Bailey (HOYC), Asjah Snead (HOYC), Meghan Adams (GHYFL)

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the Fairfax County Youth Football League as well as those students, coaches and community leaders who are being honored at this 2013 Hall of Fame celebration.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, on February 27, 2013, I was unavoidably detained and missed roll No. 53. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

HONORING MARINE MASTER SERGEANT ELBERT LESTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I rise to recognize a remarkable veteran, Marine Master Sergeant Elbert Lester. On Friday, November 2, 2012 Marine Master Sergeant Elbert Lester, now eighty-seven years of age, was awarded the Munford Point Marines' Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress for distinguished achievement.

The Munford Point Marines were the first African-Americans to serve in the United States Marine Corps in 1941, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Fair Employment Practices Commission, ultimately forcing the Corps to recruit blacks. When asked, "Why did you choose the Marine Corps?" he replied "They decided that for me." He then explained while at the Army recruiting station, the black company was asked for volunteers to go into the Marines. No one did. "So, they put our names in a hat and my name was one of those that were pulled. I was one of the unlucky ones."

Elbert Lester was assigned to the 27th Depot Company as a Corporal and would leave the service as Master Sergeant. Following training, his unit was put aboard a ship in Norfolk, VA to Guadalcanal, a thirty-day voyage that would begin his time of service in the South Pacific. Most of the 19,000 black Marines trained at Munford Point were assigned to ammunition and depot companies, bring ammunition and supplies to the front lines, and returning wounded and dead to transport ships.

After the war, he returned to Quitman County, Mississippi where he married his childhood sweetheart Pearlina Williams. They have thirteen children: Frank, Teresa, Pearlie Mae, Elbert Jr., Patricia, Lacsia, Napoleon, Miranda, Alberta, Timothy, Roderick, Darius, Cornelius and three adopted: Waring, Tiffany and Kikera Brown. Mr. and Mrs. Lester have been married for 65 years and live on their 80-acre farm. They attend Woodland Missionary Baptist Church, where they both sing in the choir.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Monford Point Marine Master Sergeant Elbert Lester for his sacrifices in promoting democracy around the world and the United States of America.